

Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026

Submission No: 006

Submission By: City of Moreton Bay

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Office of the Mayor

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19 March 2026

Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee
Parliament House

Via Submission Portal: <https://qldparlcomm.snapforms.com.au/form/justice-and-other-legislation-amendment-bill-2026>

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee

SUBMISSION – JUSTICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee in response to the *Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026*.

City of Moreton Bay commends the State Government for introducing these long-awaited reforms to address the escalating problem of metal theft in Queensland. In Moreton Bay, we understand these impacts firsthand. Copper theft has caused millions of dollars in damage, plunged streets and sporting clubs into darkness and placed both offenders and members of the public at serious risk. The introduction of targeted reforms that strengthen penalties, tighten identity requirements and impose consistent transaction-record requirements represents a significant step toward disrupting the black market for stolen metal.

For years, City of Moreton Bay has been a leading advocate for stronger scrap metal regulations. On 11 September 2023, I wrote to the *Parliamentary Inquiry into Scrap Metal Theft* outlining the steep rise in copper theft in our City. Our submission detailed thefts from street lighting upgrades, sporting fields, school grounds, and new development areas—incidents that left numerous clubs unable to train, communities without lighting, and public safety compromised. In addition, at the 2023 Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) Annual Conference, I moved a motion to call on the State Government to update all relevant legislation, including the *Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 2003*, to mitigate the rise of copper theft in Queensland. Almost all Queensland local governments voted in favour of this motion.

City of Moreton Bay stands ready to combat crime in partnership with the State Government. Leading the way with our public safety program, our extensive network of CCTV cameras, Council often assists police respond faster to criminal and anti-social behaviour. For example, in October 2025, the Queensland Police Service notified Council of an incident of copper theft on the Moreton Bay Rail Link and requested footage of the incident. Council was able to assist and provide footage in this instance and has assisted the QPS several times over the past five years.

Since our previous submission, metal theft has continued to affect our City. In October 2025, Pine Rivers Netball Association had the copper wire stolen from their lights at Les Hughes Sports Complex, rendering the lights unusable for training and competition at night. The facility is used by 2,500 participants from 17 local clubs.

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In February 2026, approximately 400m of copper wire was stolen from Pine Rivers Pumas Rugby Union at the Les Hughes Sports Complex. The theft resulted in two of the three union fields unusable at night. The club has 338 active members.

These incidents highlight the persistent nature of metal theft, and particularly copper theft, in our City and reinforce the need for comprehensive reform. They demonstrate why it is critical that the legislation delivers the strongest possible regulatory model to prevent the disposal of stolen metal.

Reforms we strongly support

In our 2023 submission, we called for reforms that reflect contemporary practices adopted elsewhere in Australia, including stronger identification requirements for those selling scrap metal, mandatory record keeping by those purchasing scrap metal, restrictions on those who may purchase scrap metal, and the prohibition of cash payments. I am pleased that many of these recommendations have been incorporated into the draft Bill, including:

- Increased penalties for metal theft,
- New offences for attempted theft and the possession of suspected stolen scrap metal,
- Mandatory transaction registers for scrap metal dealings, and
- Tighter photographic ID verification requirements for second-hand dealers transacting in scrap metal.

These reforms respond directly to the risks and challenges the City has previously raised and will greatly assist law enforcement and councils in preventing and responding to copper theft.

Remaining gaps to be addressed

Although City of Moreton Bay welcomes the measures outlined above, several important measures remain absent. Consistent with the position of the LGAQ, we have identified three areas requiring further strengthening to fully disrupt the trade of stolen scrap metal and ensure all necessary safeguards are in place to prevent the disposal of stolen material.

1. “No cash for scrap”—Prohibition of cash payments for scrap metal

Gap:

Queensland is the only eastern seaboard state that does not prohibit cash payments for scrap metal. As outlined in the City’s 2023 submission, cash transactions undermine the integrity of the transaction-tracking requirements under the *Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 2003*, enable anonymity, and limit police capacity to trace sellers.

Recommended amendment:

Require all scrap metal payments to be made electronically, consistent with best-practice regulation in other jurisdictions such as New South Wales.

2. Restricting scrap metal sales to registered scrap metal dealers

Gap:

The Bill does not prohibit the sale of scrap metal to unregistered businesses. This omission leaves open a pathway for stolen metal to flow into unregulated or informal markets. As recommended in our 2023 submission, and supported broadly by Queensland councils, restricting sales to registered scrap metal dealers only, would significantly strengthen transparency and traceability within the industry

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Recommended amendment:

Amend the Bill to ensure scrap metal can only be sold to a registered scrap metal dealer, improving traceability and transparency across the sector.

3. Need for standalone scrap metal legislation

Gap:

Metal theft is a complex, cross-agency challenge spanning police, local governments, utilities, recyclers and industry. Under the current framework, responsibilities are dispersed across multiple Acts, resulting in regulatory fragmentation and inconsistent approaches to compliance and enforcement.

Recommended amendment:

Develop standalone, contemporary legislation regulating the scrap metal industry, similar to the *Scrap Metal Industry Act 2016 (NSW)*, providing consistency and stronger enforcement capability.

I again thank the Government and the Committee for progressing meaningful legislative reform that will help protect Queensland communities. City of Moreton Bay looks forward to continuing to collaborate with the State to ensure this legislation delivers the safety, transparency and accountability our communities deserve.

Should you have any further queries in relation to this matter, please contact [REDACTED], Advocacy Manager on [REDACTED] or at [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

PETER FLANNERY GAICD
Mayor

Our ref: 75101230

Enc Mayoral Submission - Parliamentary Inquiry - Scrap Metal Theft



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12 July 2023

Hon Yvette D'Ath MP
Attorney-General and
Minister for Justice and
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence

Via e-mail: attorney@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Dear Attorney-General

LEGISLATIVE CHANGE TO PREVENT RESALE OF STOLEN COPPER

I am writing to draw your attention to the increase in copper theft across Queensland and within Moreton Bay Regional Council.

As you may be aware, our Chief Executive Officer (CEO) recently wrote to the Acting Director-General, Department of Justice and Attorney-General, regarding this specific issue.

Queensland energy providers recently reported that thefts and attempted thefts of copper from the state-wide energy infrastructure network have nearly tripled between 2020 and 2022. This is supported by Queensland Police Service (QPS) data that also shows a sharp rise in copper theft, in particular over the past two years.

This trend has significantly affected many of our local communities within Moreton Bay. Recent notable examples are as follows.

- In April 2023, over 320 metres of copper cable was stolen from the Narangba Demons Baseball Club, resulting in the club's 17 teams and 200 players unable to train in the evenings - its primary training time.
- In 2022, the adjacent Narangba Eagles Soccer Club, which has over 700 members, had copper cabling stolen from its fields three times within six months, leaving its 60 teams from across all age groups unable to train.
- In July 2023, parts of the North Lakes and Mango Hill Street lighting network were subject to blackouts due to copper theft. A North Lakes school also had cabling illegally removed from lighting poles on its grounds and sporting fields earlier this year.
- Between May and June 2023, stolen copper has been replaced five times within six weeks at Burpengary Train Station.

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These are only some of the examples where the effects of copper theft are not only adversely harming our communities but, in some cases, severely compromising public safety.

I understand that there are potential changes to the *Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 2003* that could assist in preventing the resale of stolen copper.

I further understand that the use of cash payments in particular to second-hand dealers undermines the application and consistency of keeping a formal transactions register, which is a requirement under Section 37 (1) of the Act. Eliminating the use of cash in these transactions, as well as other amendments to legislation, would therefore curb the resale of stolen copper, as I note has been achieved in other jurisdictions.

For this reason, Council will be putting forward a Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) Annual Conference motion seeking updated legislation that, at minimum:

- prohibits scrap metal from being sold to businesses other than registered scrap metal dealers;
- prohibits scrap metal dealers from paying cash for scrap metal
- requires scrap metal dealers to report suspicious transactions to the police
- requires scrap metal dealers to keep and maintain corresponding records of transactions for buying scrap metal, including details of the person selling the scrap metal and
- reflects contemporary comparable legislation in other jurisdictions (i.e. *NSW Scrap Metal Industry Act 2016*).

I strongly urge you to consider these potential changes to legislation and other measures that would prevent the resale of stolen copper in Queensland and look forward to hearing your response on this matter.

Should your office have any further queries in relation to these issues, please contact [REDACTED], Chief External Relations Officer, on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

PETER FLANNERY
Mayor

Our ref: 67473288